



X-PECT THE UNX-PECTED...


PETER DAVID • RYAN SOOK

# X-FACTOR

## #1







**"X-FACTOR."** IT MEANS SOMETHING THAT'S **UNPREDICTABLE**. THE FLY IN THE OINTMENT. THE SPANNER IN THE WORKS. THE BASEBALL FAN GETTING IN THE WAY OF A PLAY THAT CHANGES THE WHOLE SERIES.

IT'S THE THING YOU BEAT YOURSELF UP OVER NOT HAVING ANTICIPATED, EVEN THOUGH NO ONE POSSIBLY COULD HAVE.

WHEN SOMETHING HAPPENS THAT YOU DIDN'T SEE COMING, AND YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO HANDLE IT...YOU CALL US...

YOU CALL...

...AND WE'LL LAUGH AT YOU AND HANG UP.

KIDDING. I'M KIDDING.

EXCEPT... NOT ALWAYS.

BY THE WAY, THAT'S NOT ME UP THERE ON THE LEDGE, PREPPING FOR THE BIG DIVE. THAT'S RICTOR.

# X-FACTOR

**PETER DAVID** WRITER **RYAN SOOK** PENCILS **WADE VON GRAWBADGER** INKS  
**JOSE VILLARRUBIA** COLOR ART **VC'S CORY PETIT** LETTERS **MOLLY LAZER & AUBREY SITTERSON** ASSISTANT EDITORS  
**ANDY SCHMIDT** EDITOR **JOE QUESADA** EDITOR IN CHIEF **DAN BUCKLEY** PUBLISHER

X-Factor No. 1, January, 2006. Published Monthly by MARVEL COMICS, a division of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, INC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 417 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10016. © 2005 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. \$2.99 per copy in the U.S. and \$4.25 in Canada (GST #R127032852) in the direct market and \$2.99 per copy in the U.S. and \$4.25 in Canada (GST #R127032852) through the newsstand. Canadian Agreement #40668537. Printed in the USA. AVI ARAD, Chief Creative Officer. ALAN FINE, President & CEO Of Toy Biz and Marvel Publishing. DAVID BOGART, VP Of Publishing Operations; DAN CARR, Director of Production; ELAINE CALLENDER, Director of Manufacturing; JUSTIN F. GABRIE, Managing Editor; STAN LEE, Chairman Emeritus. For information regarding advertising in Marvel Comics or on Marvel.com, please contact Joe Maimone, Advertising Director, at jmaimone@marvel.com or 212-576-8534. For Marvel subscription inquiries, please call 800-217-9158.





GEEZ, RIC.  
WHAT'RE YOU  
PLAYING AT?

MY NAME'S JAMIE MADROX. THEY  
CALL ME THE MULTIPLE MAN--  
WAIT FOR IT, YOU'LL SEE WHY. POOR  
RICTOR UP THERE IS AN OLD FRIEND...



THEY CALL THIS  
KIND OF BEHAVIOR  
"A CRY FOR HELP."

I DON'T BUY THAT.  
A CRY FOR HELP  
IS, "OH MY GOD,  
SAVE MY BABY!"

THIS STUFF?  
THIS IS JUST  
ANNOYING.



TUMP  
TUMP  
TUMP

STILL...  
RICTOR'S ONE  
OF OURS.  
A MUTANT.

MIGHT AS WELL  
DEAL WITH HIM.



OKAY,  
GUYS. HIT  
ME WITH  
YOUR BEST  
SHOT.



HE MIGHT  
AS WELL JUMP.  
SAVES HIM HAVING  
TO DIE IN THE  
INEVITABLE NUCLEAR  
HOLOCAUST WE'RE  
HEADING  
TOWARDS...

IF HE DOES OR DOESN'T, IT  
SHOULD BE HIS CHOICE. I DON'T  
SEE THAT WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO  
INTERFERE...ALTHOUGH HEISENBERG  
MIGHT SAY JUST BY OUR  
OBSERVING, WE'RE--

HOW CAN  
HE WANT TO DIE ON  
A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT LIKE  
THIS? BESIDES, SUICIDE IS  
A PERMANENT SOLUTION  
TO A TEMPORARY  
PROBLEM--





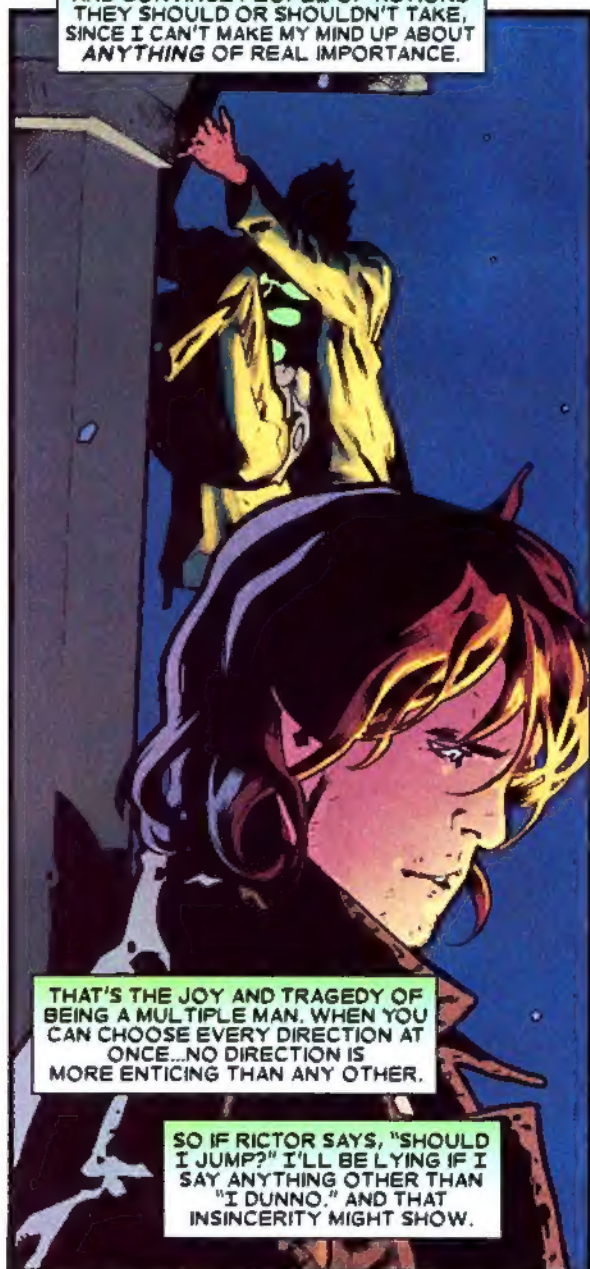




OF COURSE, I COULD TRY TO TALK RICTOR OUT OF IT MYSELF.

SHOW-OFF.

BUT I'M THE LAST PERSON TO TRY AND CONVINCE PEOPLE OF ACTIONS THEY SHOULD OR SHOULDN'T TAKE, SINCE I CAN'T MAKE MY MIND UP ABOUT ANYTHING OF REAL IMPORTANCE.



THAT'S THE JOY AND TRAGEDY OF BEING A MULTIPLE MAN. WHEN YOU CAN CHOOSE EVERY DIRECTION AT ONCE...NO DIRECTION IS MORE ENTICING THAN ANY OTHER.

SO IF RICTOR SAYS, "SHOULD I JUMP?" I'LL BE LYING IF I SAY ANYTHING OTHER THAN "I DUNNO." AND THAT INSINCERITY MIGHT SHOW.



HEY, RIC! HOW'S IT HANGING?

TRYING TO STOP YOU FROM DOING SOMETHING STUPID.

MADROX! WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?

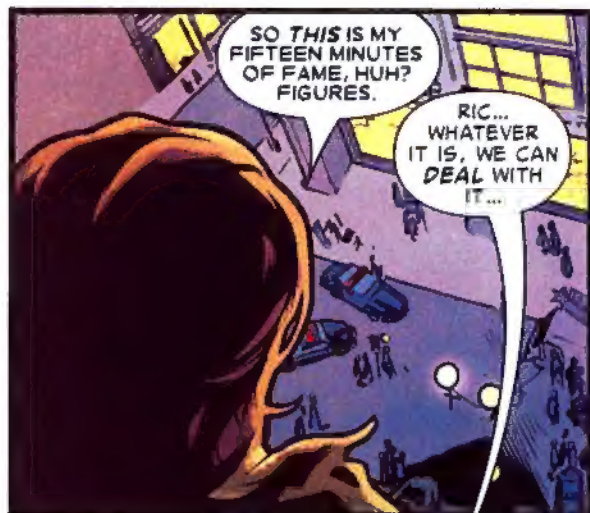
WELL, JUST...JUST DON'T GET TOO CLOSE.



THIS OKAY?

Y...YEAH. FINE. SO... WHO SENT YOU? XAVIER? FROST?

NOBODY. YOU MADE A "BREAKING NEWS" BULLETIN, PAL. SAW YOU ON TV.



SO THIS IS MY FIFTEEN MINUTES OF FAME, HUH? FIGURES.

RIC... WHATEVER IT IS, WE CAN DEAL WITH IT...



I'M NOT A MUTANT ANYMORE, JAMIE.

I CAN DEAL WITH ANYTHING... EXCEPT THAT.





THE UNEXPECTED. THE UNANTICIPATED. THAT'S WHAT WE **SPECIALIZE** IN. UNFORTUNATELY, THE X-FACTOR CUTS BOTH WAYS.

WE THINK WE'VE GOT IT ALL COVERED, BUT SOMETIMES IT TURNS OUT...  
...NOT SO MUCH.



THIS IS EVERYTHING, TERRY. EVERYTHING YOU ASKED FOR.

WITH THIS INFORMATION, YOU CAN PUT AWAY MY BOSS, MR. MANETTA, FOR GOOD.

DID I DO OKAY?

YOU DID GREAT, VICTORIA.



MANETTA MADE THE LIVES OF A LOT OF MUTANTS PRETTY MISERABLE. TOOK A LOT OF MONEY WITH HIS CONFIDENCE SCHEMES.

I DIDN'T DO IT TO HELP THEM, THERESA.



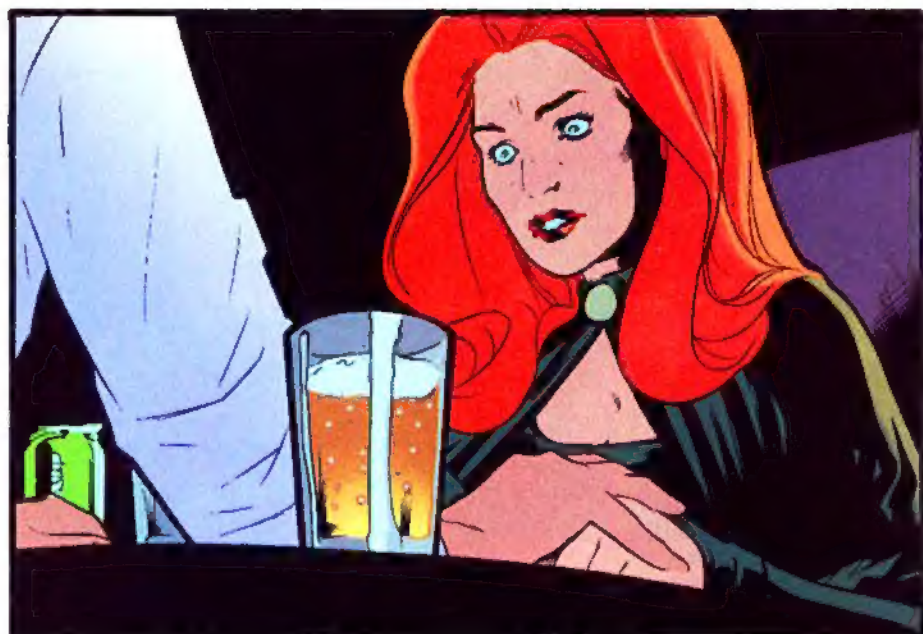
I DID IT TO HELP YOU.

YOU KNOW THAT, DON'T YOU?

IT WASN'T FOR OTHER PEOPLE. I DID IT 'CAUSE YOU ASKED ME TO.



I DID IT BECAUSE I LOVE YOU.

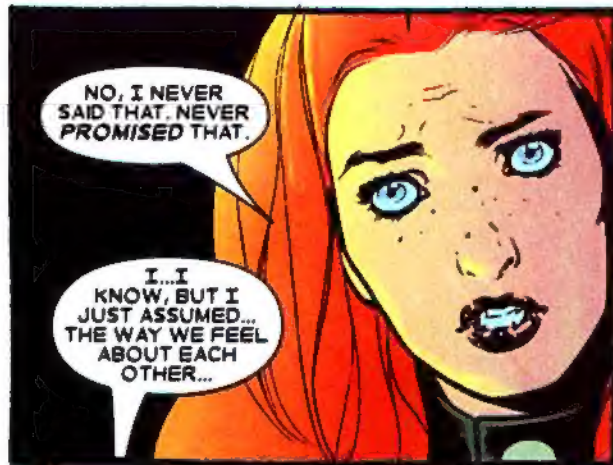






LOOK...  
VICTORIA...WE'RE  
GOING TO BE GETTING  
YOU INTO A WITNESS  
PROTECTION  
PROGRAM...

AND YOU'LL  
BE WITH ME,  
RIGHT?



NO, I NEVER  
SAID THAT. NEVER  
PROMISED THAT.

I...I  
KNOW, BUT I  
JUST ASSUMED...  
THE WAY WE FEEL  
ABOUT EACH  
OTHER...



OH JEEZ...  
HOW DO I  
EXPLAIN  
THIS?

EXPLAIN  
WHAT?



IT'S...  
COMPLICATED.  
IT HAS TO DO  
WITH MY  
VOICE.

I  
LOVE YOUR  
VOICE.

YEAH, I  
KNOW. THAT'S  
THE THING. MY  
VOICE IS--



VICTORIA...  
THESE PAGES...  
THEY'RE  
BLANK.

WHAT?  
BUT THAT...?

IT'S NOT  
POSSIBLE.

IT IS IF  
SOMEBODY  
SWITCHED IT  
ON YOU.



MY GOD...  
THERESA...

DO YOU  
THINK THEY'RE  
ON TO ME?





**BAM- BAM-**

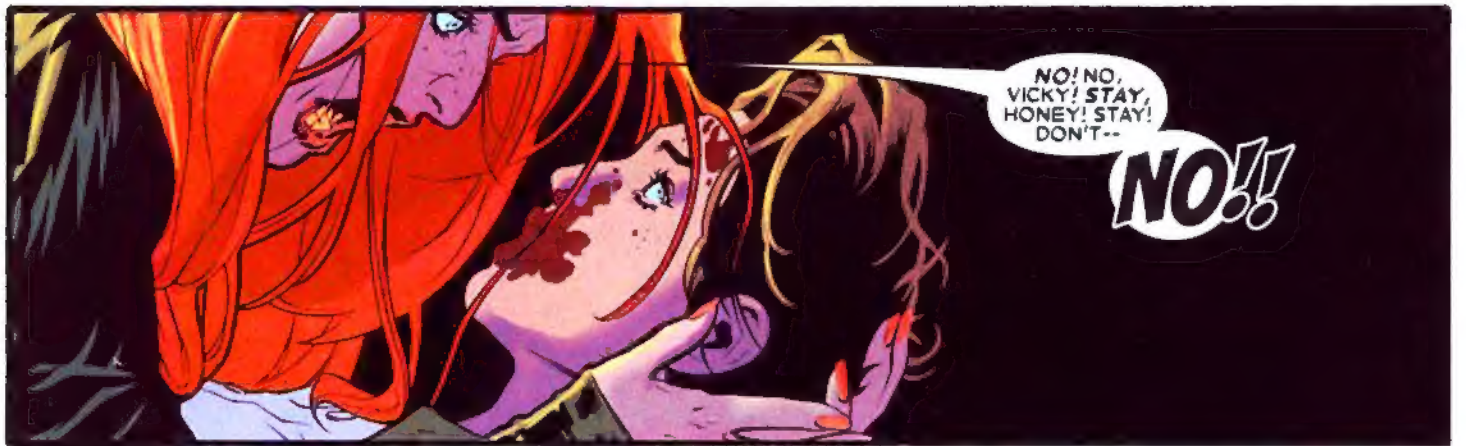
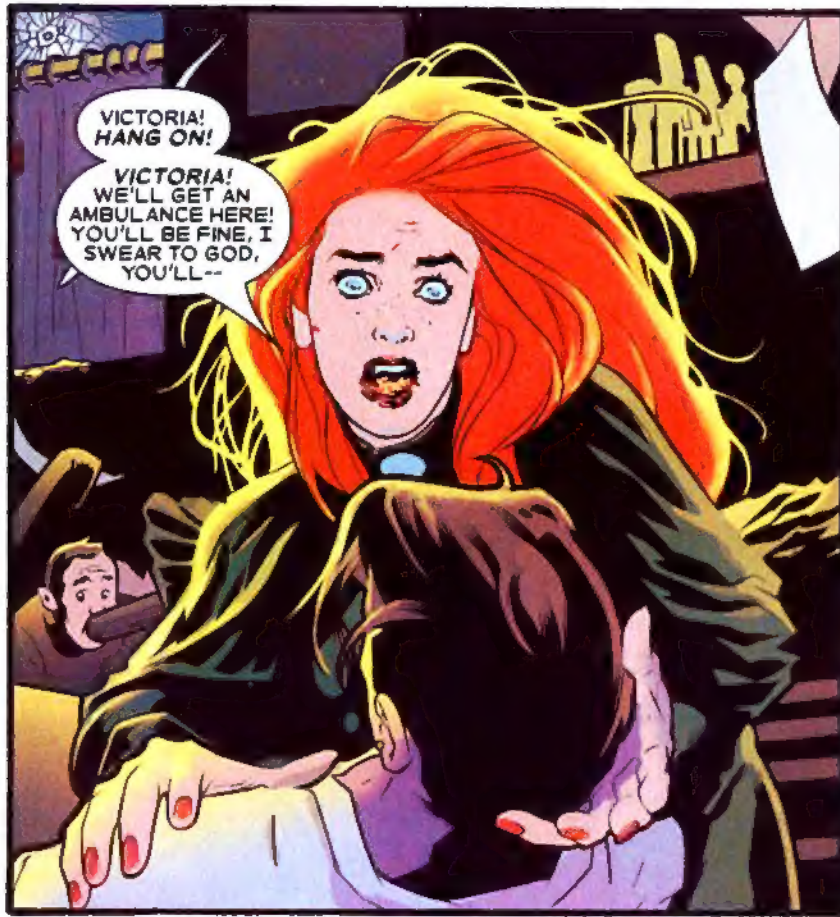
**BAM- BAM-**

**BAM-**

**BAM-**

**ARRRRRRHHH!!!**









NO!  
REALLY?

THE  
ESTIMATES ARE...  
WHAT? NINETY  
PERCENT OF MUTANTS  
ARE SAPS NOW?

"SAPS?"

HOMO  
SAPIENS.

I THOUGHT  
THE POPULAR  
SLANG WAS  
"NORMS."



"NORM" FOR  
"NORMAL." I HATE  
THAT. LIKE I WASN'T  
NORMAL?

"NORMAL"  
FOR ME WAS...

CRAP, NO  
ONE CAN *BEGIN*  
TO UNDERSTAND  
MY "NORMAL."

TRY  
ME.

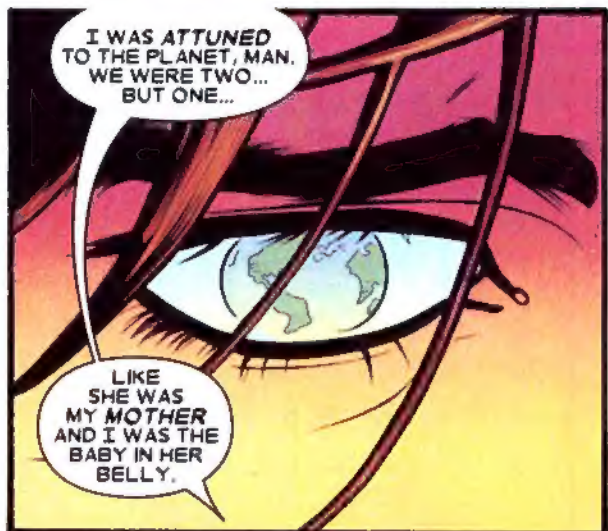


LOOK,  
IT'S...

PEOPLE THINK  
MY WHOLE THING  
IS, I COULD MAKE  
THE GROUND  
SHAKE.

BUT  
THAT BARELY  
BEGINS TO...

I  
COULD...



I WAS ATTUNED  
TO THE PLANET, MAN.  
WE WERE TWO...  
BUT ONE...

LIKE  
SHE WAS  
MY MOTHER  
AND I WAS THE  
BABY IN HER  
BELLY.



"I FELT THE RAIN SEEPING THROUGH  
HER DIRT...THE SHIFTS IN TECTONIC  
PLATES...THE LIFE FORCE IN HER,  
FROM EVERY ANT TO EVERY  
GROWING SEED...I JUST ..AND NOW..."



IT'S LIKE SOMEONE  
THREW A BAG OVER  
MY HEAD, STUFFED  
MY EARS AND NOSE  
WITH COTTON

I MEAN I USED  
TO FEEL SORRY  
FOR 'NOT JUST  
THE SAPS, FOR  
OTHER MUTANTS,  
TOO.

I WAS THE ONE-  
EYED MAN IN THE  
KINGDOM OF THE  
'FREAKIN' BLIND.

AND  
NOW  
I'M NO  
DIFFERENT  
THAN THE  
ONES I  
PITIED.

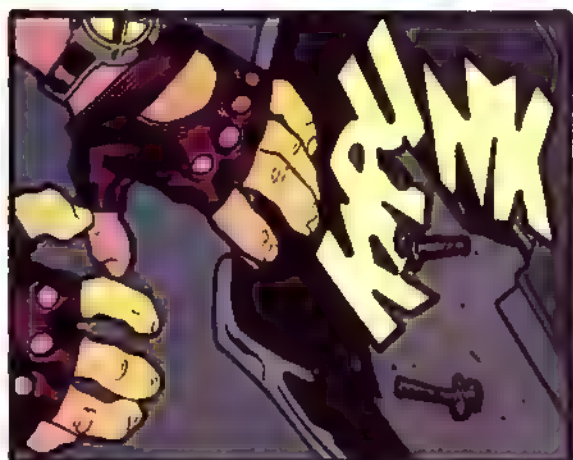
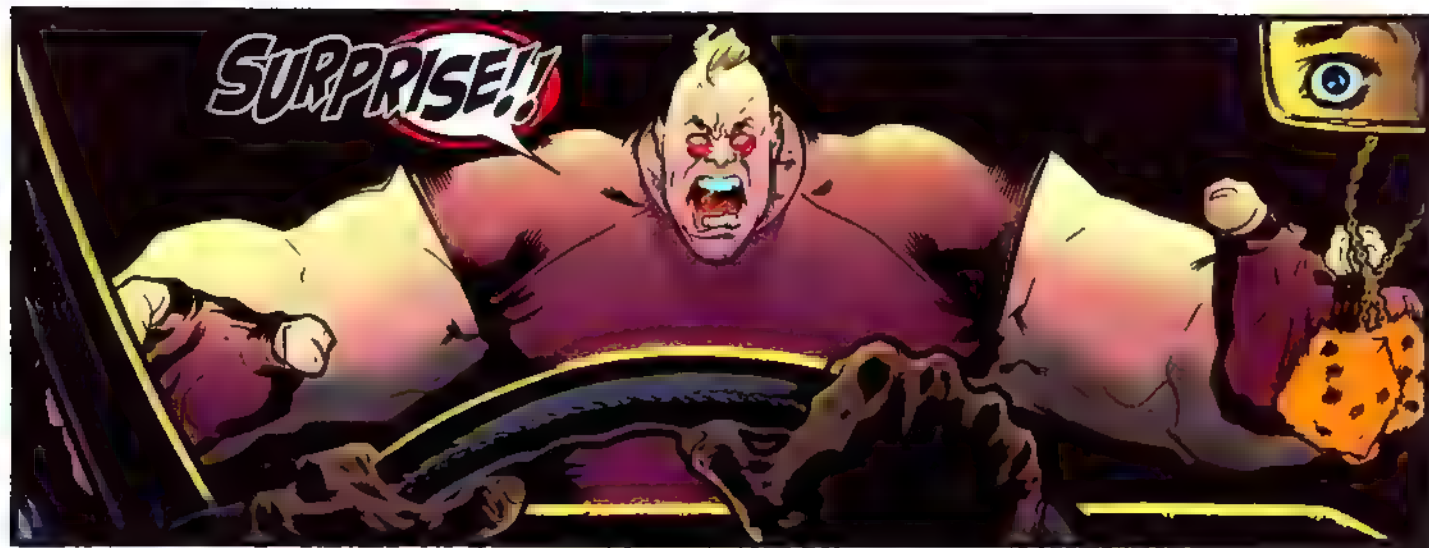
ACTUALLY, I AM DIFFERENT.  
'CAUSE NO ONE ELSE EVER  
HAD IT TO BEGIN WITH, AND I  
CAN EXPLAIN IT AND MAKE  
YOU UNDERSTAND  
IT...

...BUT NO  
ONE ELSE CAN  
FEEL WHAT I  
FELT...AND CAN'T  
ANYMORE

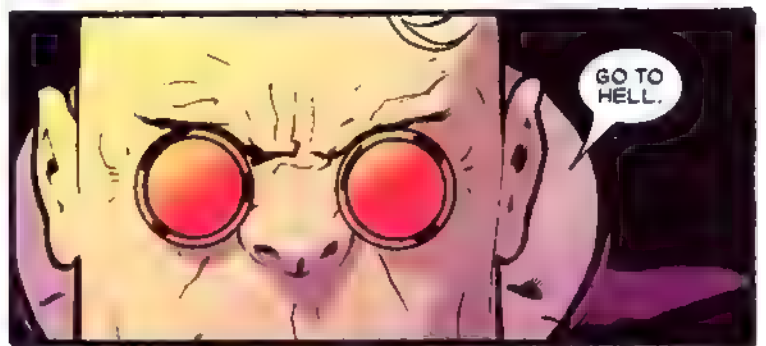
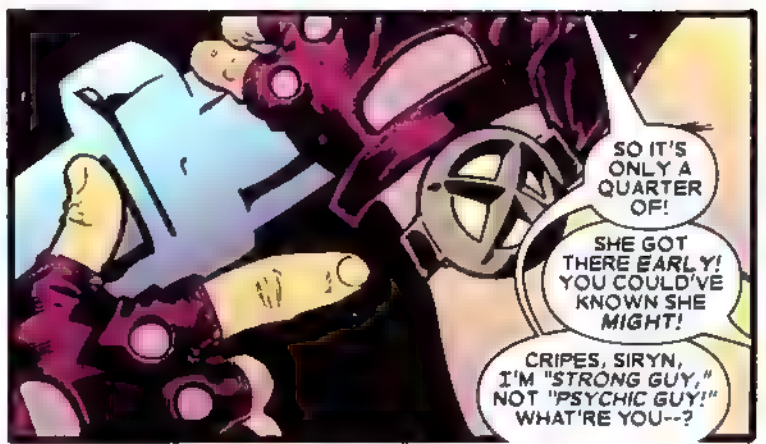
YOU GOT  
NO IDEA WHAT  
IT'S LIKE BEING  
ALONE IN A  
CROWD.

OH...  
YOU'D BE  
SURPRISED.













HE'S KEEPING RIC TALKING, WHICH IS THE IMPORTANT THING. NO ONE EVER JUMPS IN THE MIDDLE OF A SENTENCE. IT'S...

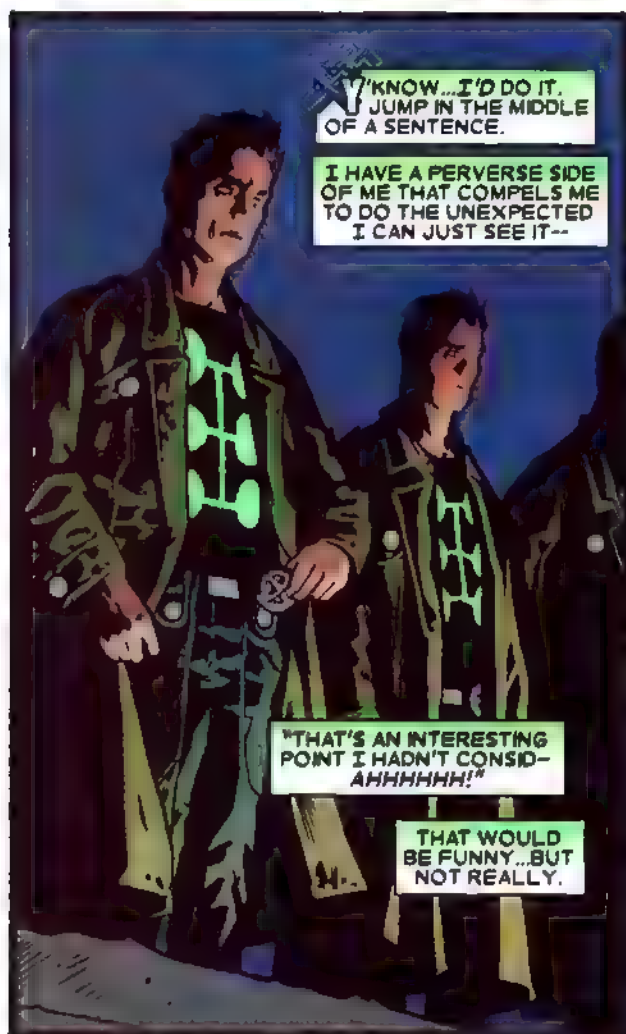
...I DUNNO... RUDE.

SHOULD YOU COME HERE? BY ALL MEANS. AND HURRY.

NO, I WASN'T IMPLYING YOU WERE GOING TO STROLL. I WAS--



JUST GET OVER HERE AND DON'T GIMME GRIEF, OKAY? JEEZ.

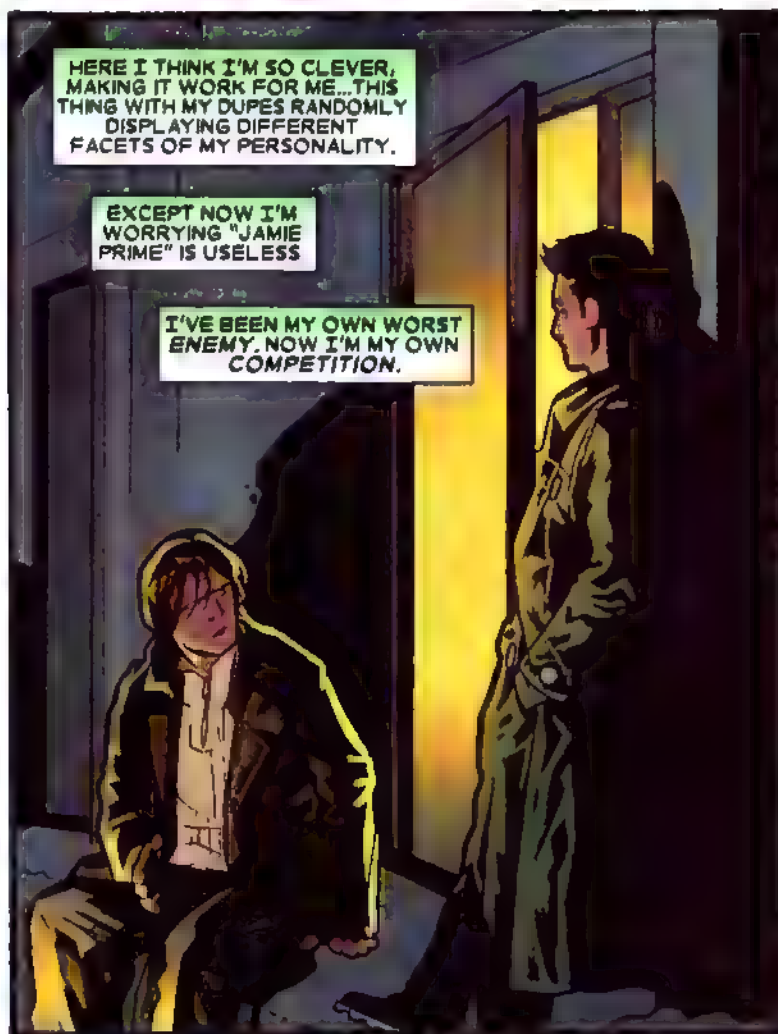


Y'KNOW...I'D DO IT. JUMP IN THE MIDDLE OF A SENTENCE.

I HAVE A PERVERSE SIDE OF ME THAT COMPELS ME TO DO THE UNEXPECTED I CAN JUST SEE IT--

"THAT'S AN INTERESTING POINT I HADN'T CONSID-  
AHHHHHH!"

THAT WOULD BE FUNNY...BUT NOT REALLY.



HERE I THINK I'M SO CLEVER, MAKING IT WORK FOR ME...THIS THING WITH MY DUPES RANDOMLY DISPLAYING DIFFERENT FACETS OF MY PERSONALITY.

EXCEPT NOW I'M WORRYING "JAMIE PRIME" IS USELESS

I'VE BEEN MY OWN WORST ENEMY. NOW I'M MY OWN COMPETITION.



"X-FACTOR?" REALLY? AND YOU'RE THE BOSS?

YUP. IT STARTED OUT AS A SMALL DETECTIVE AGENCY. ME, STRONG GUY, WOLFSBANE...

"WOLFSBANE?" RAHNE JOINED UP?

PART-TIME, YEAH. STRICTLY LOW-RENT...UNTIL I GOT A MILLION BUCKS TO UPGRADE.



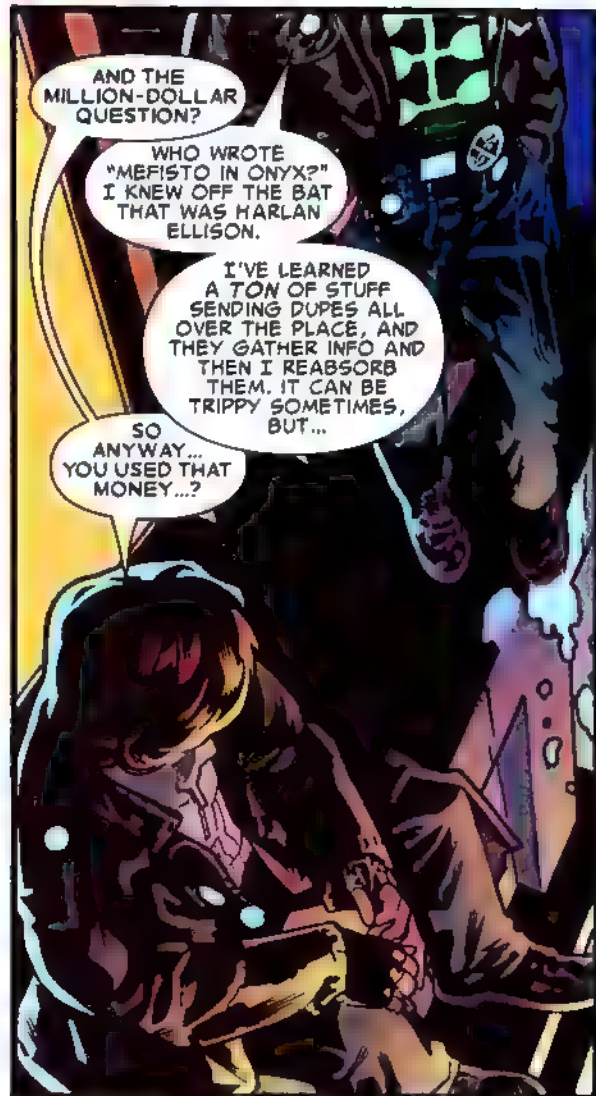
WHERE'D YOU GET A MILLION DOLLARS FROM?

FUNNY STORY, ACTUALLY...









AND THE MILLION-DOLLAR QUESTION?

WHO WROTE "MEFISTO IN ONYX?" I KNEW OFF THE BAT THAT WAS HARLAN ELLISON.

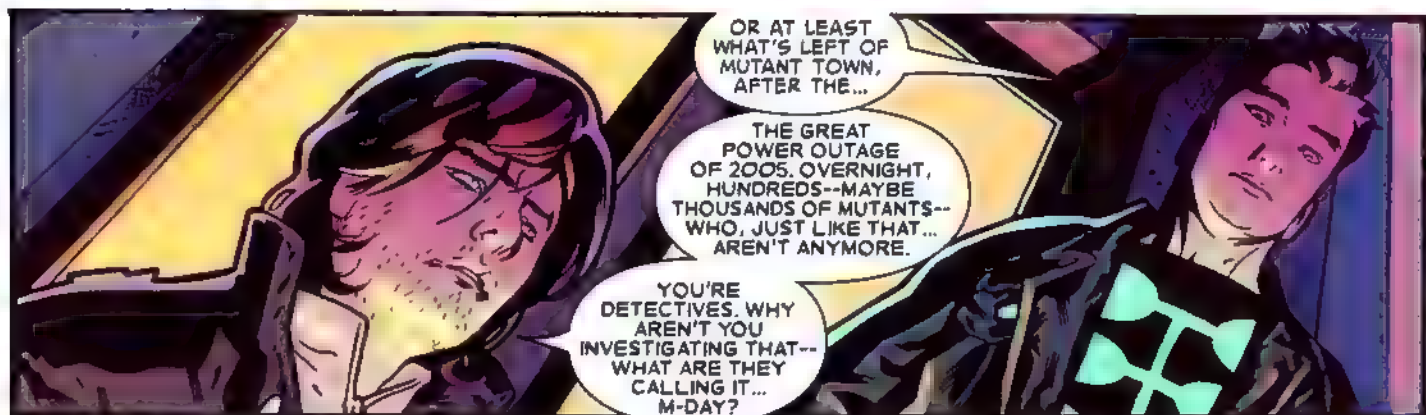
I'VE LEARNED A TON OF STUFF SENDING DUPES ALL OVER THE PLACE, AND THEY GATHER INFO AND THEN I REABSORB THEM. IT CAN BE TRIPPY SOMETIMES, BUT...

SO ANYWAY... YOU USED THAT MONEY...?



"YEAH, I DID...TO BUY THE BUILDING WE WERE IN. THE OFFICES ARE THERE, WE TOOK ON A FEW MORE OPERATIVES, AND WE'VE GOT APARTMENTS SET UP SO WE CAN LIVE THERE..."

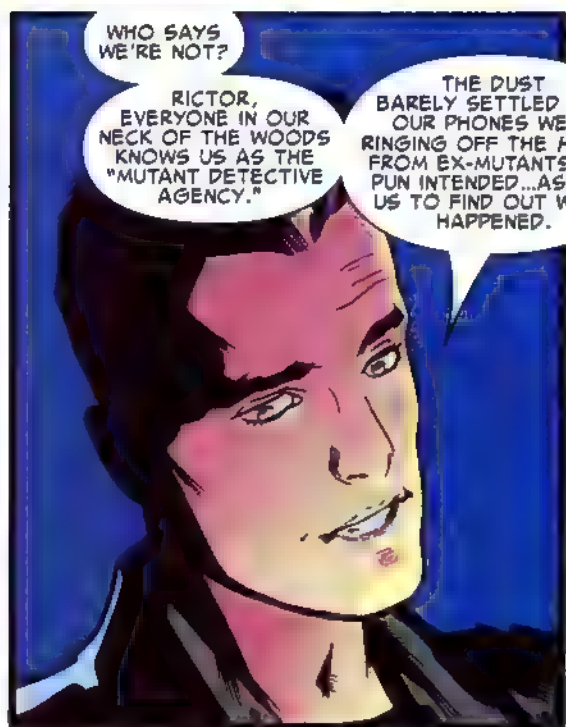
"...WHICH ISN'T EXACTLY WITHIN BUILDING CODE, BUT THE LOCAL LAW DOESN'T BOTHER US, AND THE BIG BOYS TEND TO STAY OUT OF MUTANT TOWN IF AT ALL POSSIBLE..."



OR AT LEAST WHAT'S LEFT OF MUTANT TOWN, AFTER THE...

THE GREAT POWER OUTAGE OF 2005. OVERNIGHT, HUNDREDS--MAYBE THOUSANDS OF MUTANTS--WHO, JUST LIKE THAT... AREN'T ANYMORE.

YOU'RE DETECTIVES. WHY AREN'T YOU INVESTIGATING THAT-- WHAT ARE THEY CALLING IT... M-DAY?



WHO SAYS WE'RE NOT?

RICTOR, EVERYONE IN OUR NECK OF THE WOODS KNOWS US AS THE "MUTANT DETECTIVE AGENCY."

THE DUST BARELY SETTLED AND OUR PHONES WERE RINGING OFF THE HOOK FROM EX-MUTANTS...NO PUN INTENDED...ASKING US TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED.



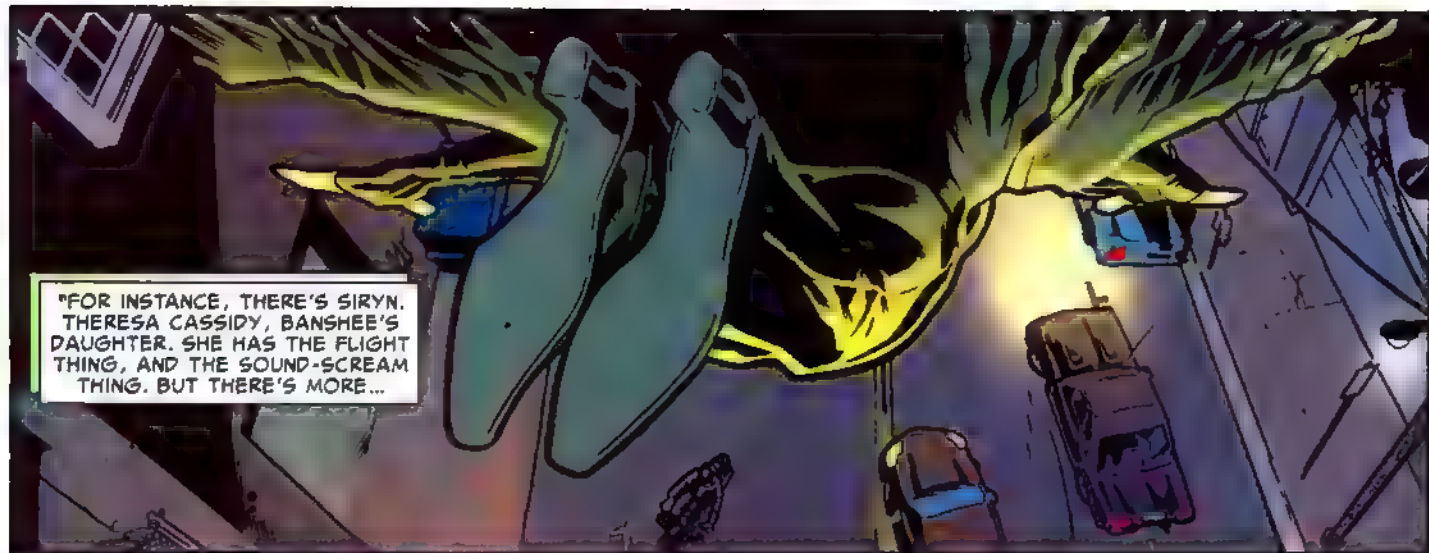
IT'S NOT THE ONLY CASE WE'RE WORKING ON, BUT WE ARE WORKING ON IT.

OKAY, SO...WAIT. WHO'S "WE" EXACTLY?



OH, SOME GREAT PEOPLE. TOP FLIGHT.

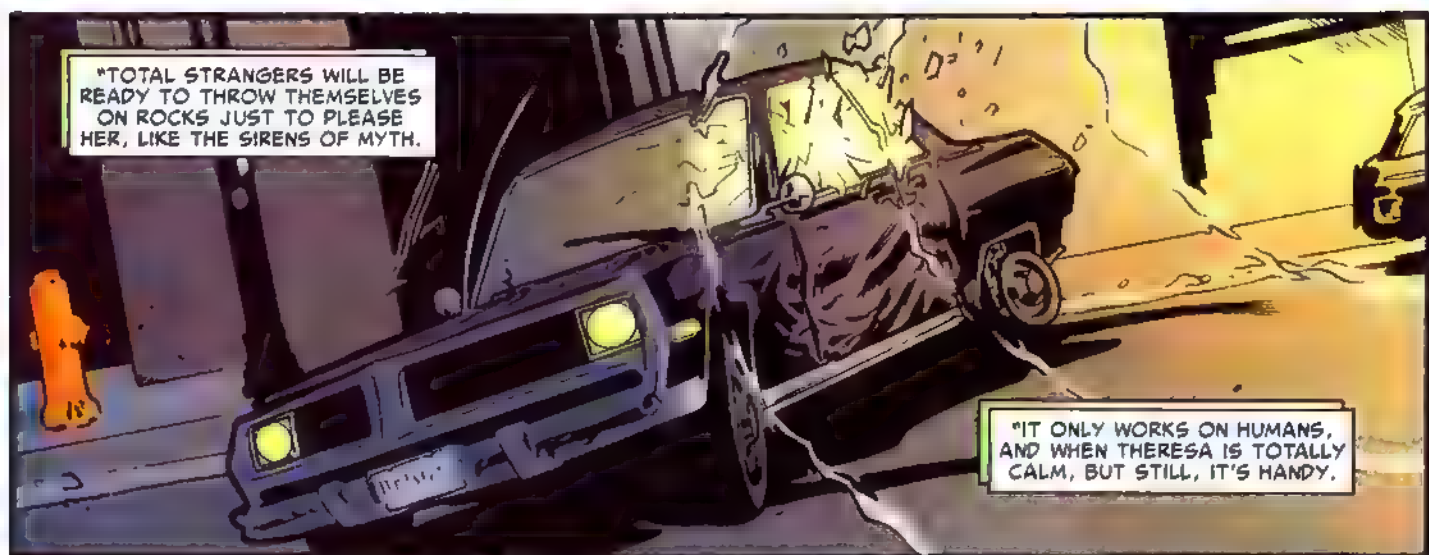




"FOR INSTANCE, THERE'S SIRYN. THERESA CASSIDY, BANSHEE'S DAUGHTER. SHE HAS THE FLIGHT THING, AND THE SOUND-SCREAM THING. BUT THERE'S MORE...



"RECENTLY SHE DISCOVERED IF SHE MODULATED HER SPEAKING VOICE A CERTAIN WAY, SHE CAN MAKE PEOPLE ADORE HER. DO WHATEVER SHE WANTS THEM TO.



"TOTAL STRANGERS WILL BE READY TO THROW THEMSELVES ON ROCKS JUST TO PLEASE HER, LIKE THE SIRENS OF MYTH.

"IT ONLY WORKS ON HUMANS, AND WHEN THERESA IS TOTALLY CALM, BUT STILL, IT'S HANDY.

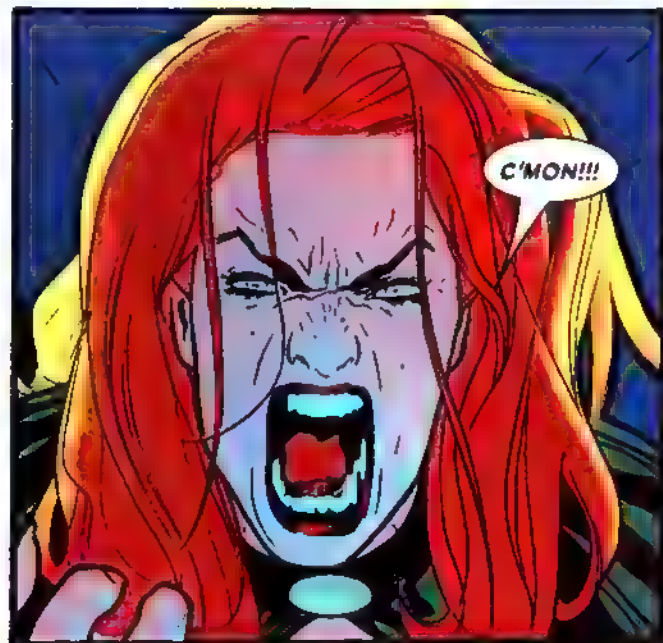


"SHE'S A SWEETHEART, THERESA IS. TOTALLY FUN PERSON.



"EVERYBODY SHE ENCOUNTERS JUST TAKES TO HER "













DON'T YE BE  
"HI, RAHNE-ING"  
ME!

SUICIDE?! DO  
YE KNOW WHAT'LL  
HAPPEN IF YE KILL  
YUIRSELF? DO  
YE?



IT'S A MORTAL  
SIN! IT'S A DEATH  
BLOW TO YUIR  
SOUL!

YE'LL GO  
STRAIGHT TO  
HELL! HELL,  
RICTOR!

ETERNAL  
PUNISHMENT,  
BURNING IN TH' LAKE  
OF FIRE FOR EVER  
AND EVER!



OR YE'LL BE  
HUNG UPSIDE DOWN  
AND FLAILED BY DEMONS  
WITH THORNY WHIPS,  
RIPPING THE SKIN FROM YUIR  
BODY AND THEN IT GROWS  
BACK AND THEY RIP IT OFF  
AGAIN, AND MAGGOTS  
WILL EAT YUIR  
ENTRAILS AND--



Y'KNOW...IN  
JAPAN, SUICIDE IS  
HISTORICALLY  
REGARDED AS AN  
HONORABLE  
MEANS OF--

DOES THIS  
LOOK LIKE JAPAN?  
DOES IT?! YE SEE SHINTO  
SHRINES ANYWHERE?! A  
TOSHIRO MIFUNE FILM  
FESTIVAL DOWN THE  
STREET? DO YE?



UH...  
NO?

CORRECT!  
AND YE KNOW  
WHY? 'CAUSE  
YOU'RE NOT IN  
BLEEDING JAPAN,  
THAT'S WHY! DO  
YOU KNOW  
WHERE YE  
ARE?!





I...THINK  
I'M IN X-FACTOR  
HEADQUARTERS...  
AREN'T I?

YEAH.  
YOU ARE.  
WHAT DO YOU  
WANT?



I'M  
LAYLA  
MILLER.

THAT'S  
WHO, NOT  
WHAT.

UM...ARE  
YOU, Y'KNOW...  
GOING TO DRINK  
THAT?



NO. I'M AN ALCOHOLIC.  
SO I JUST GET TO STARE  
LONGINGLY...

...AND DWELL  
ON THE FACT THAT  
A YOUNG GIRL DIED  
AND IT WAS MY  
FAULT.



I  
THOUGHT  
IT WAS MY  
FAULT, SI.

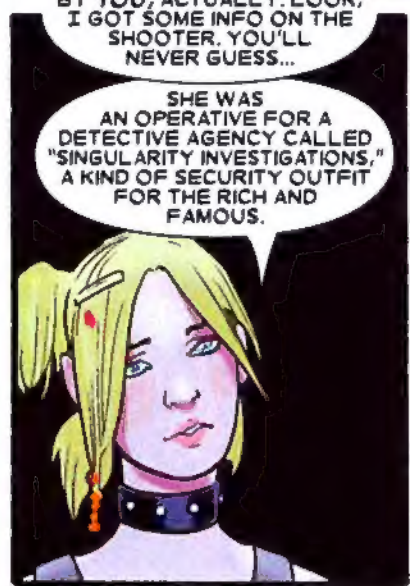
HEY THERE.  
SI, DID YOU  
HEAR ME? IT  
WASN'T--

OH!  
HI.



I HEARD YOU.  
SORRY ABOUT THE  
WHOLE "BIG  
LUMMOX" THING.

S'OKAY. I  
BEEN CALLED WORSE...  
BY YOU, ACTUALLY. LOOK,  
I GOT SOME INFO ON THE  
SHOOTER. YOU'LL  
NEVER GUESS...



SHE WAS  
AN OPERATIVE FOR A  
DETECTIVE AGENCY CALLED  
"SINGULARITY INVESTIGATIONS,"  
A KIND OF SECURITY OUTFIT  
FOR THE RICH AND  
FAMOUS.



HOW DID  
Y--? WHO ARE  
YOU AGAIN?

LAYLA MILLER.  
I'M JOINING YOUR  
GROUP. IT'LL BE  
AS FUN AS...











# X-FACTOR

X-FACTOR isn't your run-of-the-mill X-Comic.

And that's how we want it.

"X-FACTOR" defines the comic you're reading. We have twists and turns galore. It's dark and muted. You'll never know what to expect when you turn the page.

And all of this will be brought to you by these fine gentlemen...

Peter David's return to the pages of X-FACTOR (he wrote a series by the same name 10 years ago) marks a departure from the kinds of comic stories he normally tells. As a fan of film noir and gumshoe detective stories, X-FACTOR represents a new labor of love for Peter, and it shows on every page.

You'll find the talented Ryan Sook's pencils here. His previous work in comics has garnered him high acclaim, and we expect X-FACTOR to benchmark a new high for his art.

When it comes to inking, you'll find no better than Wade von Grawbadger. His smooth line energizes the pencils he works over.

Jose Villarrubia is no stranger to coloring. His muted style and tone have graced such amazing projects as *THE SENTRY* with Jae Lee and *Promethea* with J. H. Williams III. On a side note, I'd like to trade places with him,

since he's living in France and that's cool.

Cory Petit is peddling his letters on X-FACTOR. He and Peter are the only two members of the MADROX (a limited series from last year that starred X-FACTOR's lead character, Jamie Madrox) creative team to return for X-FACTOR. You'll notice, if you look closely, that every Madrox duplicate has a slightly different font. I'm sure someone will let us know when we get them mixed up.

And of course, we've got assistant editors Molly Lazer and Aubrey Sitterson tracking all of these talents and adding helpful suggestions along the way. My boss, Tom Brevoort, is also overseeing the scripts with me and making sure I don't let Peter kill the NEW AVENGERS.

And lastly, hi, my name is Andy, and I'll be your editor for the evening. You can yell at me when everything you like about this comic book falls apart.

On behalf of everyone on the creative team, we hope you enjoy our first issue!

Starting with issue #3, you'll have Peter David answering your letters, so send them in!

Thanks.

X-Andy

## X-FACTOR #2



## X-FACTOR #3

